

OHRNET

THE OHR SOMAYACH TORAH MAGAZINE ON THE INTERNET

PARSHA INSIGHTS

MYSTIC CAMOUFLAGE

“Command Aharon” (6:2)

“Exposed!” “The Real Truth Comes Out!” “Unveiled For The First Time!”

We live in a world where a lack of covering is endemic; a world where everything has to be revealed. Because our society lacks a true spiritual center, the only quality that is prized is revelation. Revelation is all. That which is unseen or *cannot* be seen is distrusted and disregarded.

Holiness is something which has to be covered. Its very nature requires covering. At any time there exist 36 holy people on whose merit the whole world rests. They are hidden. They have to be hidden.

On Sunday, February 19, 1995, Rabbi Shlomo Zalman Auerbach died in Jerusalem at the age of 84. The next afternoon, 300,000 people — a number roughly equivalent to the adult Jewish population of Jerusalem — escorted him on his final journey.

The Israeli press was caught off-guard. There were no prepared obituaries, for they had never heard of him. He was frail and unimposing even in his youth. He sat on no council of sages. He created no publishing empire. He didn't distribute inspirational cassettes. He held no pulpit. For 45 years, he headed a respected Jerusalem yeshiva that provided his only salary. And 300,000 escorted this man, whom the press had never heard of, to his rest.

Holiness requires covering.

Rashi says about the above verse: “The word ‘command’ always connotes alacrity and alertness. Rabbi Shimon

said the Torah needs to command an extra degree of alertness where there is a lack of covering.”

When we think of the Temple offerings, it's easy to forget that in the majority of the offerings part of the *korban* was consumed by the *kohen* and the person who brought the *korban*. You might think that this was no more than a side benefit of the offering. In fact, this eating — this most seemingly physical of actions — covered the deepest holiness of the *korban*.

“...the flame in the heart which aspires longingly upward, homeward, must be constantly added to; aided and strengthened through reason, wisdom and discernment...”

There was one *korban*, however, in which neither the *kohen* nor the person who brought the offering partook — the *korban olah* or “elevation offering.” The *korban olah* was entirely consumed by fire. No part of it was eaten.

In other words the holiness of *korban olah* was revealed. It did not have the covering, the mystic camouflage,

that happened when the *kohen* and the supplicant ate from the *korban*.

It was for this reason that the *korban olah* needed an extra decree of vigilance and alacrity. For that which is revealed needs extra guarding and alertness.

VIRTUAL REALITY

“Command Aharon and his sons, saying: ‘This is the law of the olah.’” (6:2)

Imagine you are walking through a field. Behind you some cows lazily chew grass. Ahead of you is a fence. In the fence is a narrow gate. You saunter towards the gate and without too much attention exit the field. You're just about to go back and close the metal gate when you see one of the cows that has been following you nuzzle up to the gate.

There is a blinding blue flash. The cow convulses in paroxysms. Thousands of volts course through its body. A few seconds and it is all over. The cow is very quiet and very dead. Nothing can be heard except the birds singing away in blatant disregard to this scene.

What would you feel like? Wouldn't you think “That could have been me. That *should* have been me?”

The *korban* was the ultimate virtual reality experience.

The whole point of a *korban* was that a person who did a sin should see the death of the animal. He should see its lifeblood thrown on the corners of the altar. He should see its limbs being burned and he should think to himself “That should have been me. I am the one that they should really be doing this to.”

PARSHA OVERVIEW

The Torah addresses Aharon and his sons to teach them additional laws that relate to their service. The ashes of the *korban olah* — the offering burnt on the altar throughout the night — are to be removed from the area by the *kohen* after he takes off his special linen clothing. The *olah* is brought by someone who forgot to perform a positive commandment of the Torah. The *kohen* retains the skin. The fire on the altar must be kept constantly blazing. The *korban mincha* is a meal offering of flour, oil and spices. A handful is burned on the altar and a *kohen* eats the remainder before it becomes leaven. The Parsha describes the special *korbanos* offered by the *kohen gadol* each day, and by Aharon's sons and future descendants on the day of their inauguration. The *chattas*, the *korban* brought after an accidental transgression, is

described, as are the laws of slaughtering and sprinkling the blood of the *asham guilt-korban*. The details of *shlamim*, various peace *korbanos*, are described, including the prohibition against leaving uneaten until morning the remains of the *todah*, the *thanks-korban*. All sacrifices must be burned after they may no longer be eaten. No sacrifice may be eaten if it was slaughtered with the intention of eating it too late. Once they have become ritually impure, *korbanos* may not be eaten and should be burned. One may not eat a *korban* when he is ritually impure. Blood and *cheilev*, forbidden animal fats, are prohibited to eat. Aharon and his sons are granted the breast and shank of every *korban shlamim*. The inauguration ceremony for Aharon, his sons, the Mishkan and all of its vessels is detailed.

HAFTORAH: MELACHIM II 3:1-37

SHABBOS HAĞADOL THE GREAT SHABBOS

When the Jewish People were about to leave Egypt, G-d commanded them to take a lamb, which the Egyptians worshipped as a god, and lead it through the streets to their homes.

They tied the lamb to their bedposts, and three days later it was this lamb which served as the Pesach offering. Its blood was used to mark the

doors and lintels so that G-d would "passover" the Jewish homes, and it was eaten at the first *seder* on the very night that the Jewish People left Egypt.

On Shabbat, the tenth of Nissan, the Egyptians saw the Jews leading lambs through the street and asked "What is this lamb for?" The Jews replied "We're going to slaughter it as a Pesach offering, as G-d has commanded us." You can imagine how the Egyptians felt — seeing their god led through the street and then tied to a bedpost! Miraculously, however, they were prevented from harming the Jewish People. They ground their teeth in fury, but did not utter a murmur.

We commemorate this miracle on the Shabbat immediately preceding Pesach on *Shabbos Hagadol* — "the Great Shabbos."

WHAT'S SO GREAT ABOUT "THE GREAT SHABBOS?"

The Shabbos before Pesach is called "The Great Shabbos" because of the miracle which happened on the 10th of Nissan (see above).

But what was it about this miracle that we connect it to Shabbos. We

commemorate Shavuot on whichever day of the week the 6th of Sivan occurs. Similarly, Chanukah always starts on the 25th of Kislev, whichever day of the week that happens to be.

What was it about this miracle that we link it to Shabbos rather than its actual calendar date?

It is known that during Shabbos, all the plagues of Egypt were temporarily suspended: The bloody rivers changed back to water; the frogs stopped swarming. In honor of the greatness of Shabbos, even the plagues "took a rest."

The tenth of Nissan, when the Jews led the lambs through the streets of Egypt, occurred during the plague of darkness. If this event had taken place on a weekday, *the Egyptians would not have been able to see the what the Jews were doing and there would have been no miracle*, for the entire land was engulfed in darkness.

Now we can understand why we celebrate this miracle on the Shabbos before Pesach and not on the 10th of Nissan. For without Shabbos there would have been no miracle. That's why it's the "Great Shabbos."

Sources:

• *Ba'al HaTurim - Parshas Vaera, Devash L'pi*

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General Editor:
Rabbi Moshe Newman
Editorial & Web Advisor:
Rabbi Reuven Lauffer
Associate Editors:
Rabbi Mordechai Becher,
Rabbi Reuven Subar
Contributing Writers:
Weekly Daf, Love of the Land:
Rav Mendel Weinbach
Insights, Overview, Haftorah:
Rabbi Yaakov Asher Sinclair

Web Production: **Lev Seltzer**
Produced and Designed by the Office of Communications
Rabbi Eliezer Shapiro, Director

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THIS ISSUE IS DEDICATED IN MEMORY OF

MR. EARL GOLDSTEIN ז"ל

ר' אליהו בן ר' פסח הכהן ז"ל

WHOSE FAMILY HAS SHARED THEIR SIMCHA WITH
TWO GENERATIONS OF THE OHR SOMAYACH FAMILY

ת.נ.צ.ב.ה.

PARSHA INSIGHTS

Perforce we are sent into this world, and perforce we are taken from it. We do not own our lives. Our lives are always in the Hands of the Maker. When we do evil, we remove our *raison d'être*. It is as though we tear up our contract with G-d. G-d has a deal with each of us: He gives us life and the ability to sustain ourselves. All He asks is that we use the world in the correct manner. When we renege on the deal, we remove ourselves from the world.

However, Hashem in His infinite kindness allows us a way back. Through the process of *teshuvah* we can return to Him as though we had never sinned. The whole point of the *korban* is to awaken in the heart thoughts of regret for evil actions — thoughts of returning to Hashem.

It was the ultimate in virtual reality.

Your life on the line.

THANKS!

“If he shall offer it for a thanksgiving offering...” (7:12)

No one can say thanks for you, except you. One of the offerings mentioned in this week’s parsha is the *korban todah* — the sacrifice that people brought when they wanted to thank Hashem.

The Sages tell us that in the future, when all the other *korbanos* cease, the *korban todah* will still continue because there’s always need to say “thank you.”

In the repetition of the *amidah*, the standing prayer, only the *shaliach tzibbur* — the one leading the service — repeats the prayers. The congregation responds, but they do not repeat the blessings.

With one exception. The blessing of *modim* — “thanks.”

For all blessings in the *amidah* we can send a *shaliach*, a messenger. When we pray to Hashem to heal us, we can send a messenger. When we ask for sustenance, we can send a messenger.

But there is one thing no one else can say for us: “Thank You.” Thank you is something you have to say yourself.

WARNING: HEART - DO NOT EXTINGUISH!

A continual fire shall be kept burning on it; it must not be extinguished.” (6:6)

The Torah prohibits extinguishing the fire of the altar. On the contrary, the fire must be attended, wood and kindling added as necessary, so that flame ascends constantly.

If it is forbidden to put out even a single coal on the altar, *how much more is it forbidden to put out even a single burning ember on the spiritual altar, the Jewish heart.*

The yearning for holiness, the flame in the heart which aspires longingly upward, homeward, must rather be constantly added to; aided and strengthened through reason, wisdom and discernment — with the illumination of *mitzvos* and the light of the Torah.

Sources:

Mystic Camouflage - Chiddushei HaRim

Virtual Reality - Ramban

Thanks! - Midrash, Avudraham, Rabbi Yissochar Frand

Warning: Heart - Do Not Extinguish! - Oros HaKodesh Zevachim 91

I DIDN'T KNOW THAT!

An improper thought when bringing an *korban* can invalidate the entire *korban*. In our times, prayer takes the place of a *korban*. A person should therefore be careful not to allow improper thoughts to disturb his prayers.

• Shulchan Aruch, Orach Chaim 98:4

LOVE OF THE LAND

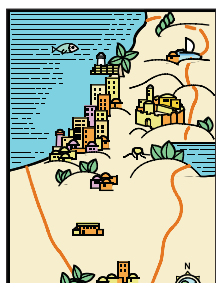
Selections from classical Torah sources which express the special relationship between the People of Israel and Eretz Yisrael

WHERE WISDOM IS WIDESPREAD

“**T**en measures of wisdom descended to the world. Eretz Yisrael took nine of them, and one (was taken by) the entire world.” (*Kiddushin 49b*)

Wisdom is defined by Rashi as pertaining to both Torah and worldly matters.

Nowhere else do we



find Rashi incorporating worldly matters into the definition of the word “wisdom” used by the Talmudic Sages.

The ten measures of wisdom, explains Iyun Yaakov, descended to the world at the time of creation, as indicated by the number ten which corresponds to the ten Divine statements which

brought about creation. At the time of creation, the Torah had not yet been given to man. The wisdom which descended from the Creator to man could therefore not refer to Torah alone, but also to worldly matters such as business and vocations. These matters are a necessary complement to Torah study, since one who studies Torah also needs a source of livelihood.

WEEKLY DAF

SHABBOS 121 - 127

THE LITTLE FIREMAN

If a Jewish child comes to extinguish a fire on Shabbos, says the *mishnah*, we do not permit him to do so, because we have an obligation to see that the child observes the Shabbos.

This seems to be in contradiction with the conclusion of a *gemara* in *Mesechta Yevamos (114a)*. The story is related there of keys to the synagogue which were lost in the street. The rabbi in charge was distraught over the fact that he would not be able to retrieve the keys. Rabbi Pedos advised him to bring some children there to play, in the hope that one of them would find the keys and carry them back to him. The halachic conclusion is that if a child carries on Shabbos or eats forbidden food there is no obligation on the *Beis Din* (the rabbinical leadership of the community) to prevent him from doing so.

Our *gemara* resolves the contradiction by pointing out that our *mishnah's* case is one in which the child is aware that his father will be pleased with his action and is extinguishing the fire for his father's sake.

There are two different approaches as to how to determine the halacha based on this *gemara*. Rambam rules that even after a child reaches the stage when he is capable of understanding when told to refrain from doing something forbidden, and even when he reaches the age of six or seven, the obligation of training him is incumbent only on the father and not on others. Tosefos, however, contends that the difference between the father and others mentioned in our *gemara* is limited to the stage between basic understanding and the age of *chinuch* (six for regular children and seven for slower developers). Once he reaches this later stage, the obligation of *chinuch* is incumbent on every Jew; if one sees such a child eating forbidden food or violating the Shabbos he is obligated to stop him. Although the *Shulchan Aruch (Orach Chaim 243:1)* rules like Rambam, the Rema cites the more stringent view of Tosefos. The ruling of *Mishnah Berurah (243:7)* is to follow the stringent view of Tosefos in laws which are of Torah origin, but to leave *chinuch* to the father alone in those laws which are of Rabbinic origin.

• *Shabbos 121a*

HOW GREAT IS HOSPITALITY!

Hospitality to guests is mentioned by our *mishnah* in one breath with learning Torah as a justification for exerting oneself on Shabbos. This led Rabbi Yochanan to conclude that the mitzvah of hospitality is equivalent in its importance to that of Torah study.

Rabbi Dimi of Nehardoa takes this one step further by stating that its importance is even greater, because the *mishnah* mentions it even before Torah study.

But it is Rabbi Yehuda quoting the Sage Rav who raises the importance of hospitality to its highest level by stating that it is even greater than welcoming the *Shechinah* (the Divine Presence). He deduces this from Avraham's request that Hashem, Who came to visit him while he was recovering from his circumcision, allow him to interrupt their encounter. This was in order for Avraham to welcome into his home the three angels disguised as wayfarers (*Bereishis 18:3*).

Why is hospitality to guests considered so great a mitzvah that it surpasses even an audience with the *Shechinah*?

Man is commanded to perform *mitzvos* in order to raise his spiritual level and bring him closer to Hashem. Receiving Hashem certainly represents a high level of intimacy with Him, but what could be a greater closeness than actually emulating Hashem? We are all guests in the world which Hashem created; when we welcome a guest, who is dependent on our hospitality, it is a reflection of the way we are dependent on Hashem. We are, as it were, "playing G-d" in a very positive way. This brings us closer to our Divine role model than even receiving the *Shechinah*.

• *Shabbos 127a*

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PARSHA Q&A ?

1. Until when may the fats and limbs of an *olah* be placed on the *mizbe'ach*?
2. What separated between the *kohen's* skin and the priestly garments?
3. If, while removing the ashes from the *mizbe'ach*, the *kohen* finds parts that were not consumed, what must he do with them?
4. If someone extinguishes the fire on the *mizbe'ach*, how many Torah violations have been transgressed?
5. When a *kohen* is inaugurated to serve in the *Beis Hamikdash*, what offering must he bring?
6. What three baking processes were used to prepare the *korban* of Aharon and his sons?
7. What is the difference between a *minchas kohen* and a *minchas Yisrael*?
8. When is a *kohen* disqualified from eating from the *chatas* sin offering?
9. What is the difference between a copper and earthenware vessel regarding removing of absorbed tastes?
10. Can an animal that has already been dedicated for an *asham* be replaced with another animal?
11. How does an *asham* differ from all other *korbanos*?
12. Unlike all other *korbanos*, what part of the ram or sheep may be placed on the *mizbe'ach*?
13. List three types of *kohanim* who may not partake of the *asham*.
14. In which 4 instances is a *korban todah* brought?
15. How does a *korban* become *pigul*?
16. Who may eat from a *shlamim*?
17. What miracle happened at the entrance of the *Ohel Moed*?
18. What position did Moshe fill during the seven days of the inauguration of the *Mishkan*?
19. Other than *Yom Kippur*, what other service requires that the *kohen* separate from his family?
20. What are the 5 categories of *korbanos* listed in this *Parsha*?

BONUS QUESTION?

Rashi never just comments; something in the text always impels him to do so. Rashi's comments are answers to unspoken questions and difficulties arising from a thoughtful reading of the Torah. Therefore, anyone who wants a true understanding of Rashi's classic Torah commentary must always ask: "What's Bothering Rashi?"

"He shall separate the ash ... and place it next to the altar. He shall remove his clothing, put on other clothing and remove the ash to the outside of the camp...."

Rashi: "He shall remove his clothing:" This is not an obligation, but rather *derech erez* (proper manners); when removing

the ash, he should not soil the garments he uses for the Divine service... therefore, he should wear other, lesser quality clothing." (6:3,4)

Wearing special clothing during the Temple service is certainly a way to honor Hashem. As Rashi adds: "The garments one wears (in the kitchen) when cooking a pot for one's master, should not be worn when serving the master a drink." So how does Rashi know that this is not an obligation, but rather *derech erez*? Perhaps the *kohen* must change out of the special clothing as an obligatory way to honor Hashem?

answer on page eight

PARSHA Q&A!

Answers to this Week's Questions!

All references are to the verses and Rashi's commentary unless otherwise stated.

1. 6:2 - Until dawn.
2. 6:3 - Nothing.
3. 6:3 - Return them to the *mizbe'ach*.
4. 6:6 - Two.
5. 6:13 - A *korban minchah* – A tenth part of an *ephah* of flour.
6. 6:14 - Boiling in water, baking in an oven and frying in a pan.
7. 6:15 - The *minchas kohen* is burnt completely. Only a handful of the *minchas Yisrael* is burnt, and the remainder is eaten by the *kohanim*.
8. 6:19 - If he is *tamei* (spiritually impure) at the time of the sprinkling of the blood.
9. 6:21 - In a copper vessel the absorbed taste can be removed through scouring and rinsing, whereas in an earthenware vessel it can never be removed.
10. 7:1 - No.
11. 7:3 - It can only be brought from a ram or sheep.
12. 7:3 - The tail.
13. 7:7 - A *Tvul Yom* – A *tamei* person who has gone to the *mikveh* and awaits sunset to become *tahor* (spiritually pure); A *mechusar kipurim* – A *tamei* person who has gone to the *mikveh* but has yet to bring his required sacrifice to become *tahor*; An *onan* – a mourner prior to the burial of the deceased.
14. 7:12 - Upon safe arrival from an ocean voyage; Upon safe arrival from a desert journey; Upon being freed from prison; Upon recovering from illness.
15. 7:18 - The person slaughters the animal with the intention that it be eaten after the prescribed time.
16. 7:19 - Any uncontaminated person (and not only the owner).
17. 8:3 - The entire nation was able to fit in this very small area.
18. 8:28 - He served as the *kohen*.
19. 8:34 - The burning of the *parah adumah* (red heifer).
20. *Olah* (6:2); *minchah* (6:7); *chatas* (6:18); *asham* (7:1); *shlamim* (7:11).

ASK *the* RABBI

MIGHTY MOSQUITO

<Chayayita@aol.com> wrote:

Dear Rabbi,

The *Ohr Somayach* publication on the *Daf Yomi* stated that harmful creatures sometimes serve the purpose of punishing the wicked. The example given was the Roman Emperor Titus who destroyed the *Beis Hamikdash*. Hashem punished him, causing a mosquito to enter his nose and creep into his brain. It tortured him for seven years until he died.

But why do good people need the mosquito around? Why does the mosquito harm me, when I haven't harmed anyone? When my daughter was in Israel this past summer, she spent one night sleeping outdoors in the desert; the mosquitoes practically ate her up.

Dear <Chayayita@aol.com>,

It's dangerous to sleep unprotected in the desert. Creatures deadlier than mosquitoes live there: Snakes and scorpions, for example. The temperature, too, can drop drastically in the desert at night. With no cloud cover, nothing to block high winds, etc., a person can go to sleep comfortably and wake up dead from hypothermia.

The mosquito incident will probably discourage your daughter from sleeping unprotected in the desert on a continual basis, and thus protect her against these dangers. Looked at this way, mosquitoes can be seen as squadrons of "health police" who save people's lives with their vigilant patrol. In moister climates, mosquitoes keep people from sleeping outside in the summer on the wet grass, hence protecting them against potentially fatal sicknesses such as pneumonia.

When Adam ate from the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil, he caused an almost irreversible mixture of Good and Evil. Since then, you can always find something good and something bad in anything you look at. The Torah believes that an underlying good pervades everything, and it's up to us

to seek the good, do the good, and look for the good in everything. [For more on this subject, see **Public Domain** this week.]

Sources:

- Rabbi Avigdor Miller
- Rabbi Zev Leff

GUESS WHO'S EATING WITH KATZ?

Anna from NY, NY,

Dear Rabbi,

What is the status of a dairy dish if a cat, known for eating roaches and other bugs, licks up the leftover milk from cereal? Is there a difference if the cat sneaks up on the table, or if the human allows the cat to lick the milk? Can animals and humans share a dish?

Dear Anna,

The dish would remain Kosher and dairy. Other than hygiene, there are no *kashrut* concerns if your cat licks leftovers from your plate. However, I wonder whether your cat wouldn't prefer his/her own dish.

AGE OLD QUESTION

Bob Mogel from Omaha, Nebraska
<Rmogel@aol.com> wrote:

Dear Rabbi,

In the Hebrew Bible it states that in Biblical times people lived to be hundreds of years old. How is this possible given the fact that people don't live nearly as long today even with the advances in medical technology?

Dear Bob Mogel,

Until the Great Flood, there were no seasons; the weather was always temperate. After the Flood, G-d tells Noah that there will be constant seasonal changes (Genesis 9:22).

Rabbi Meir Leibush (Malbim) explains this as follows: Until the Flood, the earth's axis had no tilt relative to the sun. As a result of the flood,

the earth's axis tilted in relation to the sun. Thus, the earth's climate changed drastically, resulting in a weakening of the human constitution and ability to withstand these constant changes in weather.

Thus, as a prelude to the Flood, G-d says "I won't constantly contend concerning Man ... his life-span shall be 120 years (Genesis 6:3). The Ibn Ezra explain this to mean that lifetimes would gradually decrease, until the maximum will be around 120.

I hope that answers your question about why people don't live as long today as they once did.

As for technology's inability to slow the aging process, that's more a problem with technology than with the Bible. "The scientific study of aging is a young discipline" (National Geographic, Nov. '97). Compared to many areas of science, relatively little is known about aging. Richard A. Knox refers to the "black box of aging," and calls it a "mystery" (The Boston Globe, 1997).

By way of example, take the case of Jeanne Calment who died in France last year at the age of 122. Why did she live so long? No one knows. Why did she stop living? "Officials gave no specific cause of death" (Houston Chronicle News Services 8/5/97). If she had lived another ten — or 100 — years, it wouldn't have contradicted any law of science.

SORRY SOURCE

Monika Muggli from Bad Aibling, Germany

<monika.muggli@t-online.de>
wrote:

Dear Rabbi,

Shalom! I'm looking for the exact source of a verse allegedly from the Torah that the German President Roman Herzog quoted in a speech held at the former Bergen Belsen concentration camp. It reads: "Our fathers have sinned, they are no more. We carry their sins." Can you help me?

ASK *the* RABBI

Dear Monika Muggli,

The quotation comes from Lamentations 5:7. In Lamentations — in Hebrew, *Megillat Eichá* — the Jewish Prophet Jeremiah predicts the destruction of the first Temple and the aftermath. He calls attention to the sins for which the Temple would be destroyed. The children are held accountable if they “carry” and continue the transgressions, and fail to learn from the mistakes of the previous generation.

PAST TENTHS

Saul Behr <Sbehr@mckq.co.za> wrote:

Dear Rabbi,

If someone returns to Torah observance at, say, age 40, and he wants to start keeping mitzvot, how can he approach giving *ma'aser* (a tithe for charity)? I would

imagine there's a mitzvah to return what he “stole” — i.e., the *ma'aser* he didn't give all the previous years. If, for example, he had been working for 20 years at the same salary, he would be indebted for two years of his salary! Could he start a clean account, or would he have to start making up the difference by giving, say, 20% instead of 10%, and coming clean by the time he was 60?

Dear Saul Behr,

In the situation you wrote about, it's not necessary for the person to “repay” the *ma'aser* that he had not given during all the previous years. The Shulchan Aruch says that the first year, a person should give *ma'aser* from his capital, and each ensuing year he should give *ma'aser* from his profit.

Sources:

- Rabbi Yaakov Yosef Auerbach
- Shulchan Aruch Yoreh Deah 249:1

PUBLIC DOMAIN

Comments, quibbles and reactions concerning previous “Ask-the-Rabbi” features

Re: “Who Needs a Mosquito” about why G-d creates seemingly useless or harmful creatures (Ohrnet Yisro):

Glioblastoma is a very aggressive form of brain tumor. A researcher in Alabama has found that glioblastoma cells have a chemical marker on their surface that is unique among brain cells. That is, normal brain cells lack this marker. The venom of an Israeli scorpion binds to this surface marker. The scientists are investigating the use of the venom (coupled with other agents) to treat brain tumors. The scorpion venom would be used as a “guided missile” to attack the unique target in the brain, allowing destruction of the malignant cells without damage to the normal ones.

I thought of this when I read Rabbi Mendel Weinbach's account of the mosquito that infested Titus. It is another example of the good use to which seemingly noxious animals may be put. In fact, there are numerous such examples in medicine. Viper venom, for example, can be used to treat some clotting disorders. Even blowfly maggots may be useful in debriding festering skin wounds. Consider: penicillin is derived from bread mold! I want to thank you for the Daf Yomi support material. I did not receive a true Torah education as a child; the Daf Yomi has been a bridge back to Yiddishkeit for me and — I hope, by example — my young children.

Eric Chevlen, MD. <Eric_Chevlen@hmis.org>

Re: Moshe's age as source for saying “May you live to 120” (Ohrnet Terumah):

I recently made the same remark, that the blessing to live “until 120” was based on Moshe. A lawyer, Lawrence Glick, told me the source is a verse in Bereishet. He's referring to where, according to Rashi, the Torah says the flood will be in 120 more years. But

some commentators understand the verse to mean that human lifespans would begin to decrease until they reach 120.

- Rabbi Yehuda Albin, *Ohr Somayach Chicago* <orsomayach@aol.com>

Re: Son's guilt feelings at encouraging father's medical procedure which indirectly led to father's death; Son's dilemma whether to sue the hospital. (Ohrnet Yisro):

As a lawyer experienced in both insurance defense and representing malpractice claims, I must say that permitting a potentially valid claim to be thrown away to “honor” the mother, is inappropriate. Insurance companies just love people who are so innocent as to feel timid or guilty about presenting a claim. Insurers do a great deal of advertising to lead people to believe that it is inappropriate to present even a valid claim.

- Bernie Shapiro <SSDSSI@aol.com>

Your answer was very sensitive. However, I'm not sure you made explicit enough the fact that people are not omniscient. The praiseworthiness of a person's actions are based on how responsible they were in making and carrying out the decision, not in the result, which is up to G-d.

- Haim (Howard) Roman <roman@mail.jct.ac.il> *Jerusalem College of Technology*

Re: Why we have two ears and only one nose (Ohrnet Beshalach):

And remember: We have two ears and one mouth [i.e., we should listen at least twice as much as we talk].

- Edward Simon <esimon@bilbo.bio.purdue.edu>

Hurrah for Ohrnet:

I recently sent you a couple of questions regarding the naming of a child. Your answers were most helpful, and I wanted to send off this letter of appreciation. This service is wonderful and is helping educate many about the wonderful and exciting life we can live for G-d! Please keep up this much needed *Ask The Rabbi* and know that you are encouraged by many of us who read with anticipation the questions and answers!

- Richard Porter Paxton Illinois <icxpress@net66.com>

Judging favorably means finding excuses for questionable behavior, excuses which make sense to us and leave us with a positive feeling towards the person in question. When we find ourselves suspecting others, we must ask ourselves: Are there any redeeming factors? Did I miss something? Did I jump to the wrong conclusion? For instance, take the case of the...

VERBAL EYES

“If people come to my lecture on a cold, rainy winter’s night, why don’t

they at least listen?”

That’s what I was thinking as I gave my emergency first-aid lecture. About ten minutes into my lecture, two women walk in, sit down in the back row and start talking! It was extremely distracting to know that they had so little interest in my speech that they weren’t prepared to stop gabbing for one minute!

About an hour later, I finished. And so, finally, did they. Gathering my notes and preparing to leave, I noticed the pair approaching me. At least they have the decency to come and apologize, I thought. But their apology was far from the one I

expected.

“Thank you so much, Mrs. Frankel. We really enjoyed your talk,” one said.

What? I thought. She’s got to be kidding!

“I’d like to introduce myself and my sister,” she continued. “Sorry we came late. We usually try to sit in the front row. But because of the rain, we had to drive slowly. You probably didn’t notice, but as you were speaking, I was repeating what you were saying. My sister is hearing impaired, but she reads lips very well....”

• Concept based on “The Other Side of the Story” by Yehudis Samet, ArtScroll Series

YIDDLE RIDDLE

Purim so recently passed, I thought you might be interested in this riddle: Which four people’s names from the Chumash also appear (as names) in Megillat Esther?

• Elozor Barclay
Neve Yaakov, Jerusalem

Answer: 1. Kush (*Bereishet 10:6, Esther 1:1*) 2. Madai (*Bereishet 10:2, Esther 1:3*) 3. Yair (*Bamidbar 32:41, Esther 2:5*) 4. Yehuda (*Bereishet 29:35, Esther 2:6*)

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BONUS ANSWER!

In the verse, the *kohen* first performs the service, and only afterwards removes the ash to outside the camp. So, how does changing into lesser garments honor Hashem? The point is not what he wears *outside* the Temple, but rather what he wears *inside* the Temple. If the verse were referring to an obligation to honor Hashem with special clothing, it would simply have forbidden garments that were worn outside to later be worn inside.

• Gur Aryeh (Concept based on Dr. Avigdor Bonchek’s new book “What’s Bothering Rashi?” Feldheim Publishers)

RECOMMENDED READING LIST

| | | | |
|------|---------------------------------------|------|--|
| | RAMBAN | 8:11 | Solution to Rashi’s Source |
| 6:7 | Minchah Laws | 8:22 | Role of Different <i>Korbanos</i> in <i>Miluim</i> |
| 6:18 | <i>Korbanos</i> | | SEFER HACHINUCH |
| 7:8 | Hides of <i>Korbanos</i> | | Hiding the Miracle |
| 7:14 | Leavening in <i>Korban Todah</i> | 136 | The <i>Kohen Gadol</i> ’s Offering |
| 8:1 | Chronology of <i>Mishkan</i> Chapters | 143 | Dignity and Trust |
| 8:7 | Garments of the <i>Kohanim</i> | 144 | The Benefits of <i>Kashrus</i> |